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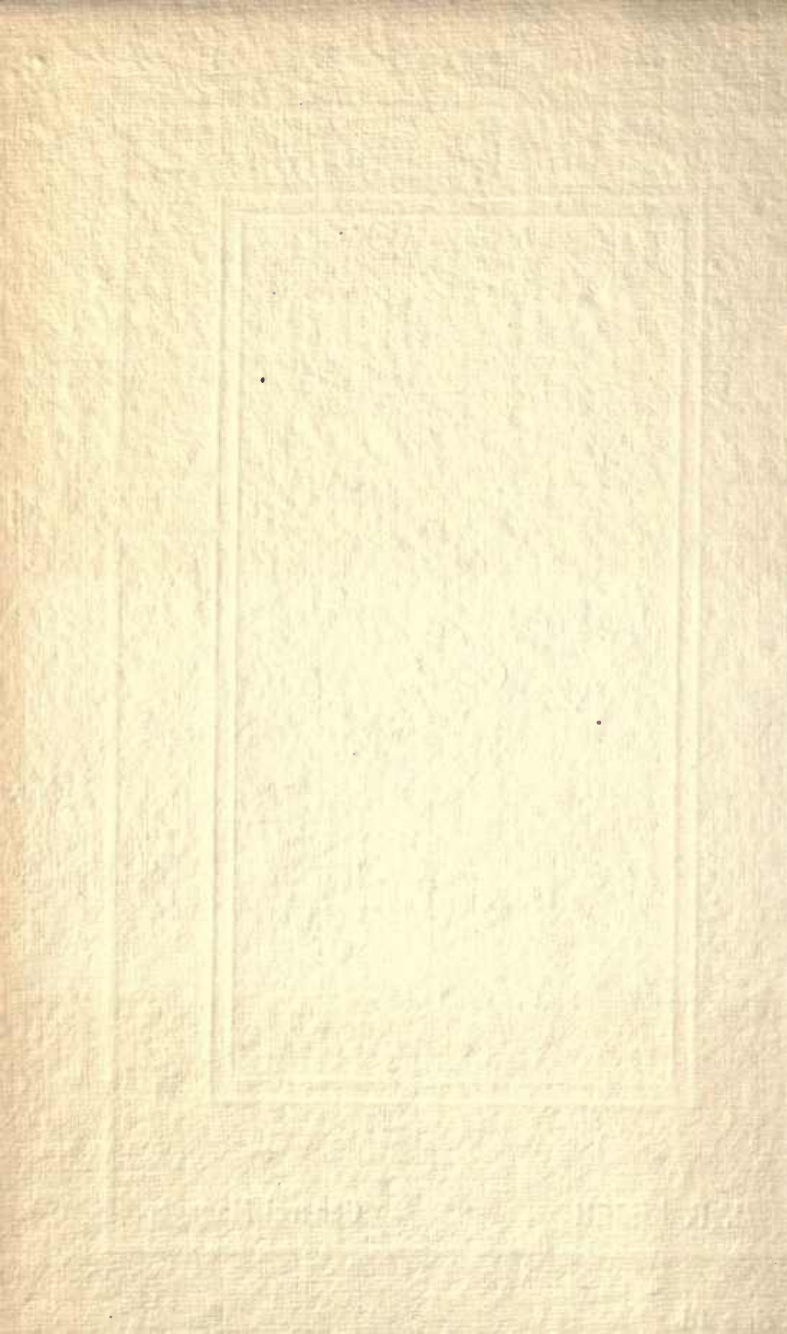


UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY

M. F. KEOGH


General Manager

Price 1d.



Connemara

The Famed Holiday Resort
amid the
Western Irish Highlands

 The Company's Hotel at Recess (Connemara) having been destroyed by fire, all reference to same should be deleted.

Marconi Wireless Station, mentioned at page 12, is not now in existence.

For fuller information see the Company's New
Illustrated Guide Book (Price 6d.)

FOREWORD

Modern travelling facilities have placed the WEST OF IRELAND within easy reach of all parts of the United Kingdom, and there is no longer any reason why this magnificently endowed district of the Homelands should not become one of the most favoured of all our Holiday Resorts.

BRITISH VISITORS coming to Ireland have the choice of many ways; but for CONNEMARA and the West the DIRECT ROUTE is to Holyhead on the London and North Western System, and thence by fast steamer to Dublin.

The Channel-crossing may be made either by the "Irish Mail" or the "Irish Express," and is reduced to a minimum by the great efficiency and rapidity of the large and splendidly-equipped passenger fleets on these specialised services.

A three hours' sea trip brings the visitor to Dublin, a handsome city entered through a beautiful Bay; and thence the way to the West—a matter of four or five hours—is direct by the Midland Great Western Railway, starting from the Broadstone Station.

This journey is rendered pleasant by the up-to-date comforts and catering provided, and by the varied charms of many of the scenes traversed, which offer, as it were, a foretaste of the richer glories at its end.

CONNEMARA

AND THE WEST OF IRELAND

"This fair land (of Connemara) offers as glorious a panorama as ever was spread out to call forth man's adoration and fill his heart with gladness."—DR. PEARD.

IF you would wander a little from the beaten track, in search of new impressions and a keen enjoyment of a healthful holiday, you will come to Connemara, the crown and glory of the famous series of West of Ireland Tours. There is no other part of the United Kingdom, and certainly very few places abroad, where such extraordinary variety of scenic loveliness and majesty is comprised in the one district.

BEAUTIFUL NAME OF BEAUTIFUL DISTRICT.

Purple mountain, and shady vale, decked with the tints of Iris; lakes as clear as the cloudless sky whose shimmering light they reflect and soften; glistening strands that merge imperceptibly into the vast expanse of the great Atlantic; towering cliffs where the eagle builds, and silent fiords, sheer and cavernous, rivalling those of Norway in their venerable grandeur—these are some of the features of this magic land, commingled, as it were, with the matchless artistry of Nature in her moments of sublimest inspiration. "Connemara," says a well-known author, "is the beautiful name of a very beautiful district, about which

there has always clung a special atmosphere of wild sport and romance."

THE APPROACH.

Connemara is conveniently reached from Galway,* whither most visitors will proceed after an agreeable journey through Central Ireland by the Midland Railway from Dublin to the West. Travellers will find particulars in the Company's Time Tables and lists of Tours, and a great deal of attractive information and practical suggestion is contained in the Official Handbook and Guide which the Midland Railway management has published for the benefit of tourists who wish to take their holiday in a systematic fashion, and thereby obtain all the greater advantage from it. In the present Booklet we are concerned with only the more striking features of Connemara, advising strangers, however, to make a fuller study of the itinerary by means of the Handbook already mentioned.

It is enough to say that where Nature has been so bounteous man's share has not been forgotten. Within recent years the whole district has been thoroughly "opened up" for comfortable travelling, thanks to the splendid system of tours organised by the Railway Company, and the local enterprise which has a hospitable welcome for the stranger, superior hotel accommodation, and *cuisine*, and comforts on the very best modern lines. Anglers, sportsmen, golfers, visitors of every kind, have gone away in raptures at what they have seen and what has been done for them, pouring blessings, at the same time, on the heads of their entertainers. The caterers of Connemara know how to do things in style.

* See companion Booklet, under that title.



Photo by]

ON LOUGH CORRIB, CO. GALWAY.

[Lawrence, Dublin.



Photo by]

FALLS AT OUGHTERARD, CO. GALWAY.

[Lawrence, Dublin.



Photo by]

[Lawrence, Dublin.
RY. CO.'S RECESS HOTEL, CO. GALWAY.



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[Lawrence, Dublin.
LAKE SHINDILLA, CO. GALWAY.

BOUNDLESS ANGLING.—INLAND.

Mention has been made of the anglers, and here, at the outset, let us quote a passage in which an enthusiastic fisherman describes the unique opportunities which exist in Connemara for the enjoyment of the gentle sport. "This country of Connemara," says Mr. Stephen Gwynn, M.P., in his charming *Holiday* book, "contains more trout and salmon-breeding water than any equal area in these Kingdoms. . . . All along the coast is a succession of small short rivers—for the mountains come down very close to the sea—and these rivers, in almost every case, flow through a series of little lakes in which the sea trout abound as they abound probably nowhere else in the world. . . . But, in addition to the white trout waters, there must be nearly a thousand lakes, big and little, which hold brown trout only, and fishing in these can always be had."

AND BY THE SEA.

"Moreover," says the same author, "there is the sea everywhere—the sea along the most scalloped and indented coastline that can possibly be conceived, a sea studded with uncountable islands, which on the Atlantic coast lie some distance off, but along the fringe of Galway Bay are nestled in along the shore, choking up the bays, and affording limitless opportunities for the sea-angler to try his chances about them. It is there you should come if you want to fish for mackerel or pollock, to shoot seals, to harpoon sunfish or grampuses, to collect rare sea birds or their eggs, or maybe, in some lucky hour, to get sight of a soaring eagle."

HOTELS.

Naturally, the first essential for an agreeable tour is the assurance that one may be able to reckon on good accommodation throughout. The following places all have HOTELS, which are distinctly above the average as to quality. During the height of the season, particularly in the month of August, it is prudent to bespeak a bed. With scarcely an exception, the places named are recognised fishing rendezvous.

On the Main Route : Galway, Oughterard, RECESS (here the Railway Company have built a first-class hotel on the site of the old Recess Hotel), Clifden, Letterfrack, Leenane, Westport.

Off the Main Route (point of divergence in brackets) : Cashel Bay (Recess Station) ; Carna (Recess Station) ; Roundstone (Ballynahinch Station) ; Renvyle (Letterfrack).

There are also hotels at Ballinrobe, Clonbur, Cong, Maam Bridge, and Louisburgh (on Clew Bay, west from Westport).

FROM GALWAY TO OUGHTERARD.

Starting from Galway on our Connemara tour we retrace the main line for a short distance, cross Lough Atalia, an arm of Galway Bay, and then the River Corrib. Pretty views of Lough Corrib are obtained on the right, on the way to *Moycullen*, and some three miles further, we reach Ross Lake, and skirt it to *Ross*. Beyond this station the Connemara mountains cut the skyline on the left front. This is our first view of the Twelve Bens, and it is only a passing one. On the right are seen the ruins of Aughnanure Castle, and then we arrive at OUGHTERARD, a pleasant village on the picturesque Owenriff river, which flows into Lough Corrib, after a sinuous course, a mile below it.



Photo by]

GLEN INAGH, CO. GALWAY.

[Lawrence, Dublin.



Photo by]

BALLYNAHINCH, CO. GALWAY.

[Lawrence, Dublin.



Photo by]

CASHEL BAY, CO. GALWAY.

[Lawrence, Dublin.



Photo by]

ROUNDSTONE, CO. GALWAY.

[Lawrence, Dublin.

A SAIL AMONG THE ISLANDS.

Situated as Oughterard is on the upper and finer half of Corrib, a sail among the islands is among the genuine pleasures of a holiday, the more especially as it may be diversified by calling at Inchagoill to see the ancient Christian remains, and then continuing the voyage to Cong Pier, whence one visits Cong Abbey, and the Ashford demesne.

SALMON AND TROUT.

Convenient to Oughterard are the best salmon waters on the upper portion of Lough Corrib, where the fishing is free, except only for the-hire of boat and boatman. The Owenriff River, which runs through Oughterard, yields fair sport at salmon in Autumn, and at all times excellent white and brown trout fishing; as do also Loughs Lettercraffroe, Nagarrivhan, Formoyle, Cloonadoon, and Ross. Ten miles by rail from Oughterard brings one to Maam Station, distant about five miles from MAAM. Here there is a small hotel, within easy reach of Loughs Ardderry, Nahillion, Bofin, and Agraftard, all holding numerous brown trout.

ANCIENT BATTLEMENTS.

A little over two miles from Oughterard, to the left from the Galway Road, is AUGHNANURE CASTLE, a 16th-century ruin, consisting of a massive tower, surrounding outworks, and a banquet hall. It was the stronghold of the once formidable O'Flaherty sept, long the scourge of the Anglo-Norman Galwegians. *Lemonfield* demesne, close to Oughterard, is still held by the same historic family.

But before we are many miles on our further way, by rail to Recess we enter, to the westward, on a country of wild breezy moorland, and of mountains as stern as anything in these islands.

RECESS AND THE RAILWAY HOTEL.

Drawing near to the western limit of this grand mass, we notice how the Twelve Bens come into view as a glorious group on the right front. On the left is a brawling trout-stream, and soon we run close past the grove-sheltered Hotel, and then about half-way down beautiful Lough Garromin (better known in defiance of etymology as Lough Glendalough), reach RECESS, 163 miles from Dublin.

As a rendezvous for travellers and anglers, it is difficult to exaggerate the merits of the neighbourhood, and the RAILWAY HOTEL—a large modern house in pleasant grounds, owned by and under the management of the Midland Company—is at the head of LOUGH GLENDALOUGH, which is the foreground of a lovely picture.

THE GREAT FISHERY OF BALLYNAHINCH.

The lough is a mile and a half long and is a part of the famous BALLYNAHINCH FISHERY. The principal waters comprised under this name are the BALLYNAHINCH RIVER, LOUGHS GLENDALOUGH, INAGH, DERRYCLARE, BALLYNAHINCH, OORID, SHANAKEELA, LEANAGH, and CAPPAAHOOSH. Of these, the Midland Railway Company has rented certain waters for the use of Guests staying at the Railway Hotel, Recess, which is the largest and most central rendezvous in the locality; here fishing can be had free, save for payment of the Licence Duty, £1, and wages of boatmen.

EXCURSIONS FROM RECESS HOTEL.

At Recess the traveller has no need to walk or drive far to obtain as perfect combinations of lake and mountain scenery as are to be had anywhere in the kingdom. Here, for instance, is LISSOUGHTER,

a hill (1,314 feet) whose summit can be reached from the hotel in less than an hour, and in comprehensiveness, and as furnishing a complete key to the geography of the district, the view it commands is undoubtedly the best to be had. The hill itself offers us a kind of geological synopsis of the rocks of Connemara, with the characteristic bands of crystalline limestone and serpentine—the variegated greenstone known as Connemara marble, which is worked here.

LOUGH AND GLEN.

Let us pause for awhile to admire the view. Northward stretches the solitary GLEN INAGH, flanked on the east by the sternly barren and blunted quartzite summits of the Mamturk range, through a gap in which—the Pass of Maumeen—we get a vista towards Maam. All the loughs comprising the Ballynahinch Fishery are spread as a chain around the foot of the Twelve Bens, of which the great spurs of BENCORR (2,336 feet), thrust out towards Lough Inagh, are a marked feature.

An excursion to GLEN INAGH should certainly be made before parting from Recess—the road affording a succession of striking views : first of Lough Derryclare, dominated by the Ben of that name ; and then of Lough Inagh, which is skirted from end to end, within view of the great corries and crags of Bencorr.

AN ABBEY RUIN.

Just beyond Ballynahinch Station we strike Ballynahinch river, on the west bank of which, three-quarters of a mile from here, stand the inconsiderable remains of TOOMBEOLA ABBEY. This was founded early in the fifteenth century for the Dominicans.

PROVISION FOR ROD AND GUN.

The ZETLAND ARMS combines excellent quarters, in an attractively remote situation, with really easy access, within a four-and-a-half miles' fare from Recess. It is on rising ground at the head of Cashel Bay, within a short driving distance of

“stands” on the Ballynahinch Fishery. But it has its own independent provision for rod and gun. The free fishing in the Gowlabeg is good, and that of the Gowla river, fished by ticket, is even better.

A GLORIOUS PROSPECT.

BENLETTERY is one of the most sharply defined peaks of the TWELVE BENS, and commands a magnificent prospect of the whole of the lower country, from Galway Bay with its sinuous inlets, up the coast past Clifden to the mountains of Achill, giving a comprehensive view of the other Bens ; while eastward the Corcogemore (Mamturk) range show out boldly. The ascent is not difficult, though steep in the upper part.

ROUNDSTONE AND URRISBEG.

The village of ROUNDSTONE, on the Coast Road from Ballynahinch to Clifden, is the nearest place with Hotel accommodation to URRISBEG. The latter is a hill of about 987 feet high, of wide-spread fame to the tourist and botanical researcher who wishes to collect the most uncommon species of plants ; it also commands, not only a marvellously-indented coast-line, but one of the most curious plateaux to be seen outside Finland. The nearest station to Roundstone is Ballynahinch, 6 miles, the road following the Ballynahinch river as far as Toombeola Bridge. Roundstone was founded by the Martins of Ballynahinch. It has two piers and quays, and within the last few years has been used by the Congested Districts Board, with marked success, as a station for deep sea fishing.



Photo by]

CLIFDEN, CO. GALWAY.

[Lawrence, Dublin.



Photo by]

LETTERFRACK.

[Lawrence, Dublin.

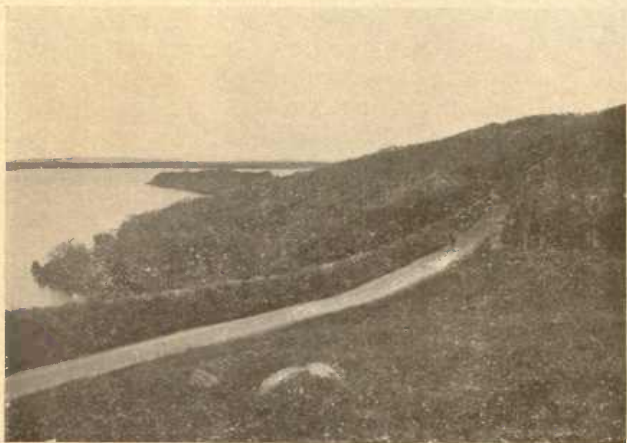


Photo by]

RENVYLE LAKE, CO. GALWAY.

[Lawrence, Dublin.



Photo by]

KYLEMORE CASTLE, CO. GALWAY.

[Lawrence, Dublin.

CARNA,

Just a dozen miles from Recess Station, along the road to Cashel Bay, is situated close to the coast and in a desolate spot. But waiving the question of scenery for the nonce, anglers know what is meant by an out-of-the-way hotel with good fishing-waters for its guests. There are loughs all around, with Lough Skannive as the chief.

THE CAPITAL OF CONNEMARA.

CLIFDEN, the capital of Connemara, and a terminus of the railway, is a modern town of three wide streets which form a triangle. The railway station is close to the eastern angle, and the hotels are in the street straight on from it.

The situation of Clifden is excellent—at the head of and well above Clifden Bay, itself an inlet of Ardbear Bay.

Clifden was founded in the reign of George IV. by a Galway squire, John D'Arcy, of Clifden Castle, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of the town. Mr. D'Arcy was in advance of his time, and the speculation, though fairly successful to begin with, did not ultimately prove a pecuniary success, and the family, like so many others, went down before the Famine and the Encumbered Estates Court. With the extension of the Midland Great Western line to Clifden, and the opening of the Railway Hotel and others, the town has shaken off the last trace of somnolence and shows its determination to profit by its advantages. Clifden has bits of coast close at hand that would make the fortune of many an English sea-side resort, and it will commend itself especially to persons who are seeking the whereabouts for a comparatively inexpensive holiday.

PICTURESQUE FALLS.

Just under the town the Owneglin river makes a picturesque cascade as it descends from the level of the upper ground down a great mass of broken rock—a grand sight after heavy rains. At the little quay, seen from the cascade, a boat may be obtained for rowing, sailing, or sea-fishing. LOUGH FADDA, 4 miles south from Clifden, is only one of a host of lakes that are practically free to the angler.

MARCONI WIRELESS STATION.

As the site of an European terminal of the Marconi Wireless System, communicating directly with America, Clifden has now quite an international reputation. Many visitors will, no doubt, make a point of seeing the installation, the general principle of which is well understood, thanks to the many popular descriptions that have appeared since the inception of this crowning wonder of the age.

THE GREAT COACH ROUTE.

There is not a finer drive in all these kingdoms than the famous Connemara coach road, and the beautiful excursions that can be made from stopping-places *en route*. Whether we keep to the main route between Letterfrack and Leenane, or turn aside from it, say by Renvyle and Salruck, the scenery is of the highest order.

Though still called the "Coach Road," it should be understood that the introduction of motor traffic has transformed the methods of progression on the tourist roads. The old horse-vehicles that jogged along so leisurely have given place to the motor coaches, of which the Railway Company have placed an excellent service on this route. These



Photo by]

LEENANE.

[Lawrence, Dublin.



Photo by]

ON THE ROAD AT LEENAE.

[Lawrence, Dublin.



Photo by]

ELPHI.

[Lawrence, Dublin.



Photo by]

SALMON LEAP, AASLEAGH, CO. GALWAY.

[Lawrence, Dublin.

grand modern conveyances now provide the visitor with time-saving, exhilarating, and really luxurious travelling. For particulars, see the Company's announcements and Time Tables.

A NEAT LITTLE SETTLEMENT.

LETTERFRACK is a hamlet or village, that owed its origin to the philanthropic efforts of Mr. Ellis, a member of the Society of Friends, immediately following the terrible times of the Famine (1846-7). It is a scattered collection of neat little houses amid fields won from what was previously but a waste of sparsely cultivated land. As a resting-place for many interesting and beautiful excursions it is deservedly appreciated, and besides the Hotel, there is clean but unpretending accommodation for a moderate number of visitors. Barnaderg Bay and Ballynakill Harbour supply all that is required for unsophisticated enjoyment of bathing and boating. Of freshwater fishing in streams and loughs, there is plenty within easy reach, and it is free for brown trout. For salmon and white trout permission is required.

If the tourist be actively disposed, the ascent of Bengob (1,460 feet), better known as DIAMOND HILL (from the quartz crystals abundant in its rocks), will be undertaken. Among easy ascents there is no finer view-point in the West of Ireland. The rugged Twelve Bens, the Pass of Kylemore, the great mountains of Murrisk, the marvellous fiord pierced coast, are the prominent features.

THE COAST ROAD TO SALRUCK.

A glorious drive of about 20 miles out and home from Letterfrack is by *Cully* (fine view), and the coast road to SALRUCK, returning by Lough Fee and the Pass of Kylemore. Salruck, approached

by a steep Pass from the foot of Lough Fee, is very charming. We shall presently look down on the Killaries from the flank of Mweelrea—the finest of all view-points in this region. The one with which we are now concerned is worth halting at Letterfrack, Renvyle, or Leenane, if only to obtain it. The LITTLE KILLARY, separated from Great Killary (or Killary Harbour of Map) by a rocky tongue, is but a short and narrow strip of sea with no special features ; but as part of the foreground of the view we are contemplating it is perfect. The islet-broken ocean beyond completes the picture.

AT RENVYLE.

Another excursion from Letterfrack that will reward the pedestrian is to follow the road northward to Dawros Bridge, at the head of the inlet of Ballynakill Bay, into which the Dawros river empties. Then, following the road diverging westward, he can soon get on to the rocky ridge of RENVYLE HILL (1,172 feet). Some 8 miles out at sea is Inishbofin, and beyond it Inishark. Northward, 10 miles away, is Inishturk. At our feet lies Tully Lough, while to the north of that we note the little lake and sandy beaches that are among the attractions of Renvyle.

RENVYLE HOTEL is about 5 miles by road from Letterfrack. It was the family residence of the Blakes, and since 1883 has been run as an hotel, under their management. Hotels on the open sea are few in this part of Ireland, and rough shooting and some fishing are here among the amusements at the visitor's disposal.

KYLEMORE.

Resuming the coach drive, we see Renvyle Hill on the left, and Diamond Hill to the right. Then,

passing a featureless loughlet, we soon reach the Dawros river, and, crossing it, find ourselves at the entrance of the PASS OF KYLEMORE. *Lough Pollacappul*, "horse's hole," is skirted, and then the full beauty of the Pass is revealed. On the left the steep dark rocks, the foothills of Benchoona, are relieved by a hanging wood ; on the right rise, bare and glossy, the mountains, of which Benbrack (1,922 feet) is a fine peak that shows its full height from the road. The fuchsia hedges will again be noticed as we approach the handsome baronial pile, KYLEMORE CASTLE, erected by the late Mitchell Henry. Just east of the mansion is an elegant church with graceful spire. LOUGH KYLEMORE is a fitting foreground, and its north side, along which our road runs, is beautiful with wood, in striking contrast with the bare south side, where, on the water's edge, is a shooting-box belonging to Lord Ardilaun. Along the road below the wood *Dabeocia*, the lovely bell-heath, is fairly abundant, and is in full bloom in August.

A NOBLE GROUP.

The road is now chiefly uphill for some miles, *Lough Nacarrigeen* is passed, on the right ; and then we get a view of *Lough Fee*. This final view of the Bens is the most comprehensive, we believe, of any to be had from the roads that command them ; but it is ahead that interest is now concentrated. We look right down on the GREAT KILLARY, and the noble group of Mweelrea and its neighbours is superb—Mweelrea itself rising abruptly from the water's edge to a dome-like summit, 2,688 feet in height. Shortly afterwards, across the Killary, we see Bundhorra Quay, at the mouth of the Delphi glen, finely dominated by Bengorm (2,303

feet). For nearly two miles our way runs alongside the Killary, at the foot of Leenane mountain, and, just as we lose the lovely rearward view, the road brings us to the hospitable Leenane Hotel.

LEENANE.

This little place is charmingly situated at the head of the Great Killary. All around are noble mountains, whose summits and recesses will not be fully inspected in many a long summer's day, whilst for those who are not climbers some of the finest walks or drives in all Ireland—for which parties are arranged at nominal fares—are to be had in different directions. Nor is the fisherman forgotten. The Leenane and Monterone streams, two loughlets and a stream on the Kylemore road, and Lough Nafooev are free. Loughs Fee and Muck can be fished by permission, not difficult to obtain. The Erriff and Delphi rivers and lakes are usually let for the season. For sea-fishing and boating the Great Killary is excellent.

For details of the numerous and delightful excursions that may be made from Leenane we refer the visitor to the *TOURIST'S OFFICIAL HANDBOOK AND GUIDE*, published at 6*d.* by the Midland Railway Company. There is a splendid choice of route and objective, whether to DELPHI, passing the famed DOO LOUGH; or to SALRUCK and LOUGH FEE; or assaying the ascent of the grand summits—MWEELREA, DEVILSMOTHER, and BENBAUM—that dominate an enchanting scene.

ON TO WESTPORT.

From Leenane to Westport direct is a journey of 18 miles. Another route, by Delphi and Louisburgh, though less direct, will repay the traveller, by the superior attractions which it offers.

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